

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-4, 6-50 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 7, 8, 15, 19, 20, 26, 27, 31, 38, and 39 have been amended. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims in view of the claim amendments, and the below comments.

Interview Summary

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the telephone interview on March 22, 2006. During the interview, Applicant and the Examiner discussed the 35 U.S.C. §112 first and second paragraph rejections, the drawing rejections, and the 35 U.S.C §102 rejections. The Seki reference and the reasons why Seki does not anticipate the claims were also discussed. No agreement was reached.

In a follow up call on April 4, 2006, the Examiner indicated that the 35 U.S.C §112 first paragraph rejections would be overcome if Claim 1 was amended to recite “bypassing” instead of “removing”. The Examiner also indicated that the drawing objections would be overcome if such an amendment was made.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 16-18, 23-25, 35-37, and 48-50 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the suggestion.

Objection to the Drawings

The drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a), on the basis that the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims, specifically Claim 1. Claim 1 has since been amended. All features in the claims are shown in the drawings. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn in light of the amendment made.

Informality Objections

Claims 6 and 15 were objected to because of informalities. Claim 6 has been corrected to reflect the correct status identifier as "Previously presented." Claim 15 has been amended to reflect the Examiner's suggested correction. It is to be noted that correction of the various informalities should not be construed as narrowing amendments to the claims. In view of the amendments, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections to Claims 6 and 15.

The 35 USC §112 first paragraph rejections

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 USC § 112 first paragraph because the claims allegedly contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Claim 1 has been amended to reflect "bypassing the at least one notch filter...." The Examiner previously indicated, in an interview held March 22, 2006, that this amendment would overcome the § 112 rejection with respect to Claim 1. Applicant submits that Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and requests that the § 112 rejection be withdrawn. It is also requested that the rejection to Claims 2-4, and 6, which depend from Claim 1, be withdrawn because these claims are dependent on an allowable claim.

The 35 USC § 112 second paragraph claim rejections

Claims 31 and 38 were rejected under 35 USC § 112 second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 31

Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 31, as amended, overcomes the rejection. Applicant submits that the error that elicited this rejection was a typographical error. Claim 31, as amended, now removes any basis for rejection under 35 USC § 112 second paragraph. In addition, the amendment should not be construed as a narrowing amendment.

Claim 38

Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 38, as amended, overcomes the Examiner's rejection as to Claim 38. Applicant submits that the error that elicited this rejection was a

typographical error. Claim 38, as amended, now removes any basis for rejection under 35 USC § 112 second paragraph.

The 35 USC §102(b) claim rejections

The Examiner rejected Claims 7-15, 19-22, 26-34, and 38-47 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Seki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,677,987).

Claims 7-18

Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 7, as amended, overcomes the § 102(b) rejection. Claim 7 recites adjusting a single digital filter in response to a detection of the at least one candidate signal of unwanted acoustical feedback, as well as readjusting the single digital filter by decreasing a depth of the at least one digital filter if a magnitude of the at least one candidate signal of unwanted acoustical feedback is not reduced by a predetermined amount, such that the unwanted acoustical feedback in the space is reduced. Seki, on the other hand, does not describe a single digital filter and readjusting the same single digital filter. Rather, Seki describes deployment of subsequent filters to suppress howlings if the first filter does not accomplish the suppression (Seki, Col. 6, ll. 56-63).

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the § 102(b) rejection of Claim 7 and the Claims dependent therefrom (Claims 8-18) for at least the foregoing reasons.

Claims 19-25

Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 19, as amended, overcomes the § 102(b) rejection. Claim 19 recites adjusting at least one notch filter at a first processing rate to filter the at least one candidate feedback frequency and processing the plurality of sound signals through the at least one notch filter at a second processing rate different than the first processing rate. Seki, on the other hand, does not describe adjusting at least notch filter at a first processing rate, and further processing a plurality of sound signals through the at least one notch filter at a second processing rate different than the first processing rate.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the § 102(b) rejection of Claim 19 and the Claims dependent therefrom (Claims 20-25) for at least the foregoing reasons.

Claims 26-37

Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 26, as amended, overcomes the § 102(b) rejection. Claim 26 recites adjusting a single digital filter in response to a detection of the at least one candidate signal of unwanted acoustical feedback, as well as readjusting the single digital filter by decreasing a depth of the single digital filter if a magnitude of the at least one candidate signal of unwanted acoustical feedback is not reduced by a predetermined amount, such that the unwanted acoustical feedback in the space is reduced. Claim 26 also recites adjusting the single digital filter at a first processing rate to filter the at least one candidate feedback frequency and processing the digital input signals through the single digital filter at a second processing rate different from the first processing rate to generate digital output signals. As stated above, Seki does not describe readjusting a single digital filter nor adjusting a single digital filter at a first processing rate to filter the at least one candidate feedback frequency and processing the digital input signals through the single digital filter at a second processing rate different from the first processing rate to generate digital output signals.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the § 102(b) rejection of Claim 26 and the Claims dependent therefrom (Claims 27-37) for at least the foregoing reasons.

Claims 38-50

Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 38, as amended, overcomes the § 102(b) rejection. Claim 38 recites at least one digital notch filter implemented in the at least one processor which processes the digital input signals at a first processing rate and wherein the at least one processor determines parameters for the at least one digital notch filter at a second processing rate different from the first processing rate in response to a detection of at least one candidate frequency in at least one of the digital input signals. Seki, on the other hand, does not describe a processor which processes digital input signals at a first processing rate and determines parameters for at least one digital notch filter at a second processing rate different from the first processing rate.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the § 102(b) rejection of Claim 38 and the Claims dependent therefrom (Claims 39-50) for at least the foregoing reasons.

Appl. No. 09/658,538

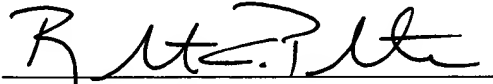
Amdt. dated June 9, 2006

Reply to Office action of February 9, 2006

SUMMARY

In view of the foregoing remarks, pending Claims 1-4, and 6-50 are patentable over the cited prior art. Applicant requests that a notice of allowance be issued. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney for the Applicant via telephone if such communication would expedite examination and/or allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. G. Pluta', written over a horizontal line.

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